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Coming of Age Ritual Notes

Malakus

Over the past weekend during an emotional upheaval I "Birthed" the concept for the ritual. I thought I would pass the concept on to you and see what you think. I have the ability to visualize a ritual from beginning to end, sometime with brief snatches of dialogue. It's like watching a play from the catwalks.

This is how I see this ritual unfolding. The boy who is entering into Manhood will be abducted from the encampment where he is staying. The women of his Mother Grove will try to fight the men off from abducting the boy. When this skirmish is over and the boy is being taken off by the men the women will mourn the loss of the child. The boy will be stripped of his clothing and dressed in a deerhide loin cloth. He will then be blindfolded and his journey will begin. Where this ritual is being held there is approximately 5 miles of paths which the boy will journey over. He will be led by his Father who will carry a lamp to light his and his son's way. At the first prescribed stop the boy will be addressed by Herne. Herne, will speak to the boy of his wild nature, what it is like to be the hunter and the hunted. He will charge the boy with the responsibilities of becoming a man through Him. He will then tell the boy that He will meet him at the appointed place in the appointed hour. Never revealing when and where that is. Herne will withdraw into the woods as the Father and son begin to journey again.

At the second stop the Father and boy will meet the Green Man. He represents the boy's earthy nature. He is the boy sexual responsibility as a carrier of sacred seed which is necessary to begin life. That he must act intelligently when it comes to the act of procreation. The Green Man as well will tell the boy that they will meet in the appointed placed at the appointed hour. The Green Man will stand in silence as the Father and boy leave.

At the third stop the Father and boy will meet Loki/Rainbow Dancer. When I visualized the archetype I saw a myriad number of colors and flashed of refracted light. Loki will speak to the boy of his dreams, wishes and hope He will inform the boy that these are necessary even as a man. That he should not give them up but allow them to mature as he matures. Loki will also tell the boy that they will meet at the appointed place in the appointed hour.

The Father and son will continue there journey until they reach the last stop on their journey. Here they will meet the Magus who is robed in black and you are unable to see his face. The Magus will speak to the boy of his inner true self, his highest ideals, his magical self. He symbolizes Divine Wisdom. When he is finished speaking he will also tell the boy of meeting in the appointed place in the appointed hour.

All the archetype will be wearing masks that will be indicative of them. Herne with horns, Green Man with a mask made of leaves, Loki with the face of the fox, and the Magus with a black mask which entirely covers his face. All the other masks will not cover the mouth area. My Spirit Brother in Akron, OH is creating the masks and the staves for the four archetypes. After the journey has been completed he will be brought to the gateway of the ritual are Prior to the ritual itself the boy will be asked to select something that symbolizes his childhood and that he should bring it with him. When the boy is abducted those who abduct him must be sure to acquire this childhood symbol to be given to the father to take on the journey. At the gateway the father will stop the boy and inform him that he must now give up this childhood symbol in order to enter into the world of men. The boy must surrender the symbol before the rite can continue. The symbol will be left at the gateway. I didn't see a traditional circle being cast, rather a ring of men hand in hand passing energy to form the circle. I keep hearing "a hand to a hand, to feed a hand" or a "brother to a brother". The circle will open to admit the father and boy The boy is still blindfold and will be place before the balefire facing the gateway through which he just entered. I see four men at various stage of the lives serving as Priests. One is just past puberty, the next has himself just become a father, the next being around 40-50 years (the age of the God at the time of his decline in power) and the last being the Grandfather. The four will each evoke one of the four archetypes that spoke to the boy during his journey. The Priest just past puberty will evoke Loki, the new father will evoke the Green Man, the 40-50 year old will evoke Herne, and Grandfather will evoke the Magus. Each will be evoked separately and when each has been evoked will enter the circle from where they have been waiting out of sight of the circle itself. Each will speak further to the boy of his mystery and present the boy with a "gift" which will enable the boy to commune with the archetype in times of trial in his life as a man. The last to speak will be Herne. Just as he is finishing what he has to say he will be interrupted by the final archetype. This is the Great Mother. She will speak to the boy of his union with her and to truly become a man he must understand her magics as well. Herne and the Great Mother will argue (choice of words, maybe not the best) over who this boy/man belong. The Great Mother informs Herne that the boy/man belongs to Her. Herne informs Her that She was there at his conception and birth and that She will have him in death but now the boy/man belongs to Him. My Spirit Brother has a staff with a deer hoof end which I see being placed on the boy's heart while Herne claims him as his. During the claiming the boy's blindfold will be removed and the boy/man will see Herne for the first time with his hoof on his chest over his heart. After the claiming is finished the boy will be approached by the four Priests for the anointing.

I have an anointing already written for this part of the rite. While the anointing is being done the four persons who are taking the roles of the archetypes will leave and return dressed as they wish. The boy will be taken to his father who will first greet the boy/man now as a fellow man and a guardian of the male mystery. The father will then take the newly made man to the North quarter where the Great Mother will speak to the newly made man bestowing Her gift to him. When the Great Mother speaks She will be heard only and not seen as if Her voice were being carried on the wind.

The newly made man will be taken to each man in turn in the circle who will give the newly made man a gift. I see the gift being wisdom something that they have learned of life and that they wish to pass on to help the newly made man's journey through life. As each man has an occupation which requires particular tools so does life require its tools.

When all have granted their gift the newly made man will be asked to bestow his blessing upon a horn of ale which symbolized the cup of brotherhood of all peoples. The cup will be shared with all in the circle and will symbolized the universality of men.

This is where I see the ritual ending. I see a simple feast being held where the ritual has been. More cups will be filled, stories share in the spirit of brotherhood. As the night wears on towards dawn the newly made will be left to himself, the balefire and the night. He will return to the campsite from which he was abducted no longer as a child but as a man with all the responsibilities of a man.

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